

**701—7.23(17A) Ex parte communications.**

**7.23(1) *Administrative law judges.*** Iowa Code section 17A.17 provides that individuals assigned to render a proposed or final decision or to make findings of fact and conclusions of law in a contested case shall not communicate, directly or indirectly, in connection with any issue of fact or law in that contested case, with any party, or any person with a personal interest in or engaged in prosecuting or advocating in either the case under consideration or a pending factually related case involving the same parties, except upon notice and opportunity for all parties to participate. Therefore, if the administrative law judge desires to communicate with any party or person with a personal interest in or engaged in prosecuting or advocating in either the case under consideration before the administrative law judge or a pending factually related case involving the same parties, the administrative law judge shall notify such persons or parties indicating the time and place at which all affected persons or parties may meet to discuss the matters.

**7.23(2) *Parties or their representatives.*** Iowa Code section 17A.17 provides further that parties or their representatives in a contested case shall not communicate, directly or indirectly, in connection with any issue of fact or law in that contested case, with individuals assigned to render a proposed or final decision or to make findings of fact and conclusions of law in that contested case, except upon notice and opportunity for all parties to participate. Therefore, if any party or their representative desires to discuss certain matters with the administrative law judge the party should notify the administrative law judge and the opposing party of the desire to meet with the administrative law judge and the administrative law judge upon notification of the desire shall advise the parties or their representatives in writing of the time and place at which the affected persons or parties may meet to discuss any matters.

**7.23(3) *Sanctions.*** Any party to a contested case proceeding may file a timely and sufficient affidavit asserting personal bias of an individual participating in the making of any proposed or final decision in that case. The department shall determine the matter as part of the record in the case. When the department in these circumstances makes such a determination with respect to a department member, that determination shall be subject to de novo judicial review in any subsequent review proceeding of the case.

The recipient of a prohibited communication as provided in section 17A.17 may be required to submit the communication if written or a summary of the communication if oral for inclusion in the record of the proceeding. As sanctions for violations of any prohibited communication provided in section 17A.17 a decision may be rendered against a party who violates these rules, or for reasonable cause shown the director may censor, suspend, or revoke a privilege to practice before the department, or for reasonable cause shown after notice and opportunity to be heard, the director may censor, suspend, or dismiss any departmental personnel.